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Students who are blind sweep statewide journalism competition

MONTGOMERY - Students from the Alabama School for the Blind swept a statewide journalism competition and the junior high division of a poster contest promoting the abilities of people with disabilities.

All winners of the "Ability Counts" journalism and poster contests will be honored at a May 1 luncheon at the Capital City Club in downtown Montgomery. The event will begin at 11:30 a.m.

Copies of the five winners' essays were converted from Braille and will be available at the luncheon. The winning posters will also be on display.

The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities sponsored the competition, which is in its 59th year and is open to public and private schools throughout the state. This is the first year that the Alabama School for the Blind and the Alabama School for the Deaf were invited to participate.

Charlotte Lowry, principal of the Alabama School of the Blind, said she is excited her students won so many awards.

"We think it is wonderful," she said. "We are certainly ecstatic. They are all well-deserving students, and we are thrilled that they were included in this contest."

The purpose of the contest is to promote a greater awareness of the contributions that people with disabilities make to the workplace and the community.

Students were invited to write essays or create a poster covering this year's theme, "Workers with disabilities: America's people, America's talent, America's strengths."

The journalism essay contest awarded five high school winners, while the poster contest awarded the top three winners in each of the junior high, high school, and college division categories. Winners will receive certificates and monetary awards.

The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is a program of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, whose mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.